



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff **Scott Mittelstadt** Chief Deputy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 16, 2018

Sheriff Dale J Schmidt

Office: 920-386-4115

dschmidt@co.dodge.wi.us

This week is National Police Week. As part of police week we not only thank those who serve the public on a daily basis, but we also remember those who we have lost in the line of duty. Today in Dodge County we remembered the fallen with a ceremony at the Dodge County Law Enforcement Memorial out in front of the Dodge County Administration Building. We heard the words of Secretary John Litscher of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections who took time to honor and remember those who have fallen in both law enforcement and corrections.

Below are words from our very own Deputy Michael Morell who talks about the profession of a law enforcement officer. This is the final segment in our series of testimonials from our staff at the sheriff's office. Please take a moment to read Deputy Morell's thoughts and help us to remember and thank those who run toward danger on a daily basis rather than run from it as they work to make Dodge County a safe place to live work and visit.

"My name is Michael J. Morell, Jr. and I am a patrol deputy with the Dodge County Sheriff's Office. I have been a law enforcement officer for the past 24 years and have been with the county for the last 19. Many things have changed in law enforcement over the past quarter century in the field in technology, investigations and prosecutions. One thing that hasn't changed is the fact that men and women are called to this profession by the hope of making a difference. It is not a job for everyone; it's an inherent trait to commit yourself to selfless service and professionalism. Everyone has an opinion on how to do law enforcement but many have no idea on what it entails to do it correctly.

The men and women of the Dodge County Sheriff's Office and every law enforcement entity across this nation, work to try and ensure the safety and security of the citizens of their jurisdictions and their property. We are invested in the communities we serve, not only as public servants, but as citizens. We all live here, our children go to school with yours and we want all the same things you do. We want to see our kids grow up healthy and happy. We want to be able to walk around in our neighborhoods and feel safe in our homes. We are charged with identifying those in the community that would seek to do you harm by burglary, theft, reckless and impaired driving, physical violence and providing narcotics to the population. It is an assignment we do not take lightly and are constantly striving to get better at. We attempt to do this while working long hours 24/7/365, at night, on the weekends, over the holidays, during any type of weather including rain, sleet, snow, blizzard, tornado...whatever the situation, we will be there.

This year, May 14-19 has been designated as National Police Week, with Peace Officers Memorial Day being observed on May 15th as it has been since President John F. Kennedy recognized it in 1962. So far in 2018, fifty-four

(54) law enforcement officers have paid the ultimate price, from gunfire to work related illnesses and traffic crashes, these men and women gave their lives to the public they serve. In my career I have lost two friends in the line of duty. Officer Dale R. Tenhaken of the Manitowoc Police Department was a classmate of mine in recruit school. He was shot and killed on September 23, 1998. Deputy John "Spike" Schmitt of the Washington County Sheriff's Office was killed in an automobile crash on September 7, 1998. Let us not forget other officers that have been lost very close to our county including Deputy Bruce Williams, Green Lake S.O. EOW 10-19-03, Officer Craig Birkholz, Fond Du Lac Police Department EOW 03-20-11 and Trooper Trevor Casper, Wisconsin State Patrol EOW 03-24-15.

The thought of not going home to my wife and children is ever present as it is for all of us that put on the uniform. How do we deal with it? It's hard to say. Some of it you get used to (as hard as that is to believe). However, much of it is dealt with by the faith, trust and training you place in yourself and your co-workers. Your teammates become more than friends, they become your brothers and sisters. We watch out for each other, we know when the other is under stress just by the sound of their voice on the radio. We are there for each other when one of us goes on "that call". The call that nobody wants, that you can't even imagine in your nightmares, the call that you want to forget, but cannot no matter how hard you try.

We aren't looking for your pity, just your understanding. Your understanding that this job isn't like any other, that nothing else can combine the mix of circumstances we get. I encourage all citizens of Dodge County (and anywhere else this gets to) to reach out a hand to your law enforcement officers. Shake hands, tell them you appreciate what they do, ask how their day has been and in short just shoot the breeze. We don't get it often and in reality these days, we long to hear the approval of our citizens and to know we have their support. I'm sure all of you can watch the news or look on social media and find a story about an officer who has been accused of wrong doing, but never forget, you are only getting part of the story, the part that will create controversy and deepen the divide.

To my brothers and sisters at our office and to those at Beaver Dam, Mayville, Horicon, Waupun, Watertown, Randolph, Fox Lake, Theresa, Lomira, Brownsville, Emmet, Lebanon, Lowell, Reeseville, Columbus, Hartford, Waterloo and Iron Ridge please remember: STAY ready so you don't have to get ready, chase only what you can see, SEARCH for everything else, NEVER search alone, ALWAYS watch your back and if you can't, call me and I will."

Questions may be directed to Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt.

###